

THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
OF STURMINSTER.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF
HEALTH,

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1925.

A. W. Rose, Printer, Sturminster Newton.

The Rural District Council of Sturminster.

Annual Report OF The Medical Officer of Health,

For the Year ending December 31st, 1925.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area—39842 acres. Population—Census (1921) 7870. Estimated (1925) 7832. Physical Features and General Character—A vale, surrounded by hills, the sub-soil being either clay or gravel. The sole industry is agriculture, the greater part of the land being grass. The production of milk being the main industry. Number of inhabited houses 1921—2189. Number of families or separate occupiers 1921—2112. Rateable value and sum represented by a penny rate—£76789 and £320 respectively.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births	}	Legitimate	TOTAL.	M.	F.	}	Birth Rate (R.G.) 13.1 per 1000
		Illegitimate	101	54	47		
			2	0	2		

Deaths	102	48	54	Death rate (R.G.) 13.02 per 1000
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Number of women dying in, or in consequence of child birth	}	from Sepsis,	nil.
		from other causes,	nil.

Deaths of infants under one year of age, per 1000 births—
Legitimate 9.9. Illegitimate 0. Total 9.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)—nil.

„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)—nil.

„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)—nil.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

There is no Hospital within the area. Patients requiring hospital treatment are sent to the hospitals in the neighbouring towns of Bournemouth, Blandford, Sherborne or Shaftesbury. The Isolation Hospital at Blandford admits any case of infectious disease which is deemed advisable to be removed from the area, and the Isolation Hospital at Poole has arranged to admit any case of small pox. There is a Poor Law Infirmary connected with the Poor Law Institution at Sturminster Newton.

Ambulance Facilities.—(a) For infectious cases, an ambulance is provided by the authorities of the Blandford Isolation Hospital. (b) For non-infectious and accident cases, there is a fully-equipped motor-ambulance at Sturminster Newton.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.—There is a Tuberculosis Dispensary at Sturminster Newton, which is provided by and controlled by the County Council.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority.—There is one Sanitary Inspector, who also undertakes the duties of Food Inspector. He is a part-time officer, also holding the post of District Surveyor.

Private Nursing in the Home.—The different parishes in the District have the use of nurses who undertake both maternity work, also general nursing—one nurse usually undertakes three or four parishes. These nurses are controlled by local committees, and the funds are raised partly by voluntary subscriptions, and in most instances partly by a grant from the County Council; the nurses visit the homes of their patients as often as is necessary. There is a Nursing Home in Sturminster Newton which admits both maternity and general cases, the scale of charges to subscribers being very small.

Midwives.—There are seven midwives practising in the District.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.—The following parishes have a public water supply:—Sturminster Newton, Ibberton and Belchalwell. These parishes have a common supply of excellent water obtained from the neighbouring hills—the supply is constant and ample, and is delivered in pipes in most cases directly into the houses and partly by standpipes. Belchalwell is also partly supplied from a separate piped source by standpipes. Okeford Fitzpaine is supplied by a public piped supply from the neighbouring hill, chiefly by standpipes. This supply has, during the past year, been extended to the remote part of the village known as Highbench. Woolland has an excellent public supply from the neighbouring hill. Shillingstone has a public water supply. Stalbridge, Lydlinch and King Stag are very inadequately supplied with water; the District Council have now proposed a scheme by which these parishes will be supplied by a public supply of excellent water, from springs at Buckland Newton, and it is hoped that in the course of the present year these works will have been accomplished.

Rivers and Streams.—As is to be expected in a country district, there is a certain amount of pollution of the various rivers and streams. In most cases, however, the volume of water passing down the various streams renders the pollution almost negligible.

Drainage and Sewerage.—In most instances the drainage of the different parishes finds its way into the various water-courses. With reference to the drainage of a greater part of Stalbridge, the District Council are at the present time contemplating a Sewerage Scheme which it is hoped will deal effectually with this matter—this work is now being taken in hand at any moment.

Closet Accommodation.—In the Districts having a public water supply, the closets are mainly of the water-carriage system—in other instances the pail closet is chiefly in use; there are still, in a few instances, privies in existence, but these are gradually being replaced by the pail system.

Scavenging.—Sturminster Newton is the only parish in which this is carried out—here moveable ashbins are used, which are emptied at fixed periods.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—During the year there were 496 Inspections made. These inspections were chiefly in regard to Dwellings, but they also include Inspections of Cow-sheds, Slaughter-houses and Workshops. The number of Notices served on account of these Inspections amounted to 12, four of which were Informal Notices, and eight Statutory Notices. All of these Notices were complied with.

Cow-sheds and Dairies.—Number of Cowkeepers, Dairymen and Milk-sellers on the Register—369. Number inspected during 1925—34. Number of Notices served—2. Number complied with—2.

Slaughter-houses.—Number Registered—15. Number Licensed—15. Number Inspected during 1925—13. Number of Inspections—157. Number of Notices served—1. Number complied with—1.

Schools—On the whole, the Schools in the District are in a sanitary condition, and have an efficient water supply. The following Schools were closed during the year on account of Infectious Disease amongst the children:—Stourton Caundle, on account of chicken pox. Shillingstone, on account of mumps. Hazelbury Bryan, on account of mumps. Ibberton, on account of influenza. Sturminster Newton, on account of chicken pox, measles and influenza. Childe Oketord, on account of measles.

HOUSING.

The following Parishes are being provided with new Houses during the coming year :—

	PARLOUR TYPE.		NON-PARLOUR TYPE.	
Childe Okeford	...	2	...	4
Lydlinch	...	0	...	6
Manston	...	0	...	2
Marnhull	...	6	...	6
Okeford Fitzpaine	...	2	...	2
Shillingstone	...	4	...	8
Stalbridge	...	6	...	6
Sturminster	...	8	...	8

This makes 28 parlour type, and 42 non-parlour type houses—a total of 70.

General Housing Conditions. The shortage in houses will be, to a great extent, provided for, by the erection of the above dwellings.

Over-crowding.—This does not exist to a serious extent, and it is hoped that the few isolated cases will be done away with when the new houses are occupied.

Fitness of Houses.—On the whole, the houses in the District are fairly sanitary. There are some instances of unfitness due to structural decay—leaking roofs and dampness of walls. Many of these houses are too old and decayed to put in a proper state of repair, and should be demolished as and when new houses are erected.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of New Houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b)	...	12
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts—		
(1) By the Local Authority	...	0
(2) By other Bodies or Persons	...	3

1. Unfit Dwelling Houses—

Inspection :

- (1) Total number of Dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts—28.
- (2) Number of Dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925—18.
- (3) Number of Dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—Nil.

- (4) Number of Dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—9.

2. Remedy of Defects without service of Formal Notices—

Number of defective Dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers—3.

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceeding under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925—

- (1) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring Repairs—Nil.
- (2) Number of Dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of Formal Notices—
- (a) By owners.—Nil.
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners.—Nil.
- (3) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close.—Nil.

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- (1) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied.—6.
- (2) Number of Dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices.
- (a) By owners—6.
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners.—Nil.

C.—Proceeding under sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders.—Nil.
- (2) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made.—Nil.
- (3) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit.—Nil.
- (4) Number of Dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made.—Nil.
- (5) Number of Dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders.—Nil.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(A) **Milk Supply.** The Cowsheds in the District amount approximately to nearly 400. Some of these are well built, and well kept, but there are many instances in which it is not realized how important cleanliness, with regard to the sheds, the yards and the cows themselves, is in order that pure and wholesome milk may be produced,—the state of the yards, perhaps, is the worst condition prevalent. In many instances these are badly drained, and heaps of manure are allowed to accumulate, in many cases against the walls of the sheds, for long periods of time before they are removed.

- (1) Only one licence has been applied for and granted for the production of graded milk.
- (2) There has been no case of refusal or revocation of registration of retailers or of licences for graded milk.

(B) **Meat.** Meat Inspection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector. For the three months ending December 31st, there have been 134 inspections. No. of carcasses inspected, 889. Estimated weight of meat condemned, 383 lbs., all of which was disposed of by burial.

Private Slaughter-Houses.

	In 1920	In January, 1925	In December, 1925.
Registered	4	14	15
Licensed	4	14	15
	13	14	15

Administration of Sale of Food and Drugs Acts.—The following samples were taken during the year. Beer 1; Brawn 1; Bread 1; Butter 2; Cake 1; Citric Acid 1; Custard Powder 1; Potted Fish 1; Tinned Fruit 1; Margarine 1; Milk 5; Sausages 1. There was 1 case of adulteration viz :—Milk. The Vendor was cautioned.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

During the past five years, the district has escaped lightly with reference to the prevalence of Infectious Diseases.

Pathological and Bacteriological specimens are sent for examination to the Clinical Research Association. Four specimens have been examined and reported upon during the year.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR.

Disease.	Total	Cases	Total Deaths.
	Cases Notified	Admitted to Hospital.	
Scarlet Fever	1	0	0
Enteric Fever	1	1	0
Pneumonia	7	0	3
Erysipelas	1	0	0

The ages of the 3 cases of Pneumonia ending fatally ranged from 35 to 45 years.

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES.

DEATHS.

AGE PERIODS.	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
5—10 years			1	1				1
15—20 years		1						1
20—25 years	1						1	
25—35 years	2	1	1		1	1		
35—45 years					1	1		
Totals ...	3	2	1	2	2	2	1	2

PUBLIC HEALTH (Prevention of Tuberculosis) REGULATIONS, 1925.

Number of cases in which notices have been sent under Article 5.—1.

Dated this 31st day of March, 1926.

BERNARD S. HOLLYCK,

Medical Officer of Health.

